

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Springfield Man Arrested, Charged with Cocaine Distribution Conspiracy**

Springfield, IL - Rodger A. Heaton, United States Attorney for the Central District of Illinois, announced that a Springfield man made his initial appearance in federal court today following his arrest on charges he participated in a cocaine distribution conspiracy in Springfield. On Wednesday, March 1, 2006, the federal grand jury returned the indictment charging Peter Sidener, 38, of 316 Cranmer; however, the indictment had remained sealed pending the arrest.

In the two-count indictment, Peter Sidener is charged with conspiring with Danny J. Sidener, Jr., Michael Mohan and others to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine from January 2003 until October 28, 2005, and with using a telephone to facilitate a drug offense. Peter Sidener allegedly received cocaine from Danny Sidener and from Mohan on a consignment or "front" basis which he distributed to others. Peter Sidener also allegedly supplied cocaine to Mohan on a consignment or "front" basis which Mohan then distributed to others.

Sidener appeared this afternoon before U.S. Magistrate Judge Byron Cudmore and was ordered temporarily detained pending a detention hearing which was scheduled for March 8, 2006.

Six other defendants have been charged in separate, but related cases returned by the grand jury on November 17, 2005. Danny Sidener Jr., Michael D. Mohan, Dondi D. McIntosh, and Gerald M. Vondebur remain detained pending trial in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service. Earl V. Sidener and Adam Martin were released on bond pending trial. Danny Sidener, Earl Sidener and Vondebur are scheduled for trial on April 3, 2006. Mohan, Martin, and McIntosh are scheduled for trial on May 1, 2006.

The indictments charging the six men allege that they and others conspired to distribute five or more kilograms of cocaine from at least January 2004 until October 28, 2005. All are charged with one count each of conspiracy to distribute cocaine and use of a telephone to facilitate a drug offense. Danny Sidener is additionally charged with possession of a firearm, a Ruger 9mm revolver, in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

The charges are the result of an ongoing Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Springfield Police Department, the Illinois State Police and the Central Illinois Enforcement Group. The cases are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Esteban F. Sanchez.

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If convicted, the offense of conspiring to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine carries a statutory penalty of a mandatory minimum five years to 40 years in prison; if previously convicted of a felony drug offense, the mandatory minimum sentence is 10 years to life imprisonment. For using a telephone to facilitate a drug offense, the penalty is no more than four years in prison; however, if the defendant has previously been convicted of a felony drug offense, the penalty is no more than eight years in prison. Conspiracy to distribute five or more kilograms of cocaine carries a statutory penalty of a mandatory minimum 10 years to life in prison. The penalty for possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime is a mandatory minimum five years to life in prison.

Members of the public are reminded that indictments are merely accusations; the defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

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